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ABSTRACT

This paper reports introductory remarks to a workshop on technical/vocational teacher recruitment and training in Asia and the South Pacific. Some of the issues raised by the paper are the following: (1) What training are vocational/technical teachers/trainers receiving now and what should they be receiving for the future? (2) How are teachers recruited and are these approaches effective? (3) What qualifications should vocational/technical teachers have and are these qualifications appropriate for the future? (4) How are new teacher-recruits trained? (5) Are industry-trained teachers sufficiently up to date on modern technology and methods? (6) For what trades should students be trained? and (7) How can vocational/technical teaching be more professionalized? (KC)

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REGIONAL WORKSHOP

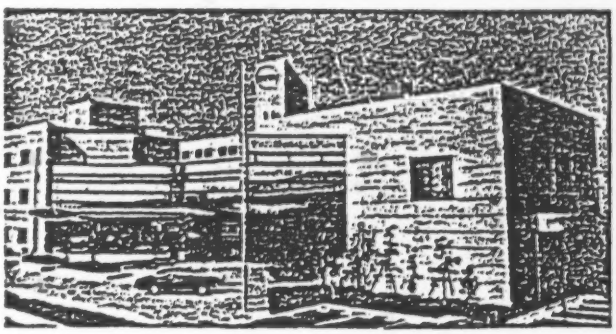
ON

TECHNICAL/VOCATIONAL TEACHER TRAINING

(11-22 May 1987 : Chiba City, Japan)

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

Jamal-Ud Din



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ADB-APSDEP-JAPAN REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON
TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL TEACHER TRAINING

Overseas Vocational Training Association (OVTA) Center
Chiba City, Japan
11 - 22 May 1987

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

Jamal-Ud Din

This Workshop is concerned with the training and development of technical and vocational teachers and trainers.

The objectives are:

a) to examine the job requirements and conditions of service of technical and vocational teachers and trainers;

b) to develop a common core curriculum for use in technical and vocational teacher and trainer training courses in Developing Member Countries (DMCs);

c) to delineate the scope of cost-effective national training schemes for technical and vocational teachers; and

d) to devise strategies for implementing such schemes.

In this Workshop, we will consider the policy issues involved in the training of trainers and teachers. We will look at the policies, legislation, administrative frameworks and resources that are available to regulate and promote the training and development of trainers and teachers in the member countries. We will look into the efficacy of the system as a whole.

If the situation, scenario and the arrangements are considered unsatisfactory or inadequate, then, what steps should be taken to rectify them? What would this Workshop recommend to improve the ***status quo****?*

The programme laid for you in this Workshop would enable you to take a hard and an in-depth review of the recuitment and training of vocational teachers and trainers.

What are the scope and objectives of their functions?

Scope and Objectives

From experience, we know that the technical/vocational teacher/trainer may be concerned with either theoretical

instruction or general subjects, or he may be teaching trade theory only or he may be teaching trade practice plus trade theory. He may be responsible for teaching all subjects to a class or he may be a subject specialist teacher.

If we look at the school system, there may be varying patterns and objectives of the vocational training involved. Generally, there are three main approaches:

a) In some cases, the training in school may be complete in itself.

b) In others, it may be complementary to practical training and experience being obtained in employment, e.g. apprenticeship, Sandwich, Block Release Courses, etc.

c) Alternatively, the primary purpose of the school courses may be educational rather than occupation oriented.

Recruitment and Initial Training

If such is the scope and objectives, how do we recruit and train technical and vocational teachers or instructors? There are four approaches:

First Approach

We recruit vocational teachers whose occupational competence has been acquired through long experience in employment and in industry. Principal selection criterion is proven ability for work. He should also have general educational background. This category of trainers are recruited at comparatively advanced age. Teacher/trainer training is relatively short duration and concentrates on the pedagogical and didactic aspects of the trainers' job.

Second Approach

We recruit young people who have completed vocational training courses. These teachers and trainers are then given further education and technical training and examination to qualify for employment. This group of teachers and trainers are employed in institutions where vocational training is school-based.

Third Approach

We recruit young persons who leave general education schools at the university entrance level. They may have completed a prescribed period of practical work experience e.g. apprenticeship. This group of teachers and trainers are trained in special teacher training institutions or at universities. These institutions are

same as or parallel to those which train teachers for general secondary education.

Fourth Approach

We recruit graduates of general secondary schools. These young people are not required to have any technical background before acceptance. After recruitment they are given full trade training as part of their vocational teacher training. In this case, training is up to four years and may include a period of practical work experience.

I have described four general approaches, but obviously, there is no single approach to recruitment and training of teaching staff. The fact is that shortage of qualified teaching staff and of candidates have led to the introduction of several methods, and levels of recruitment and training.

Needs and Problems

If this is the kind of situation, as we perceive, what are the major issues? Firstly, there is general recognition that a far greater proportion of the working population, both present and future, requires vocational training than in the past.

Secondly, there is a vital need to overhaul the training systems and to keep them under review if they are to remain in step with constant change in the nature of the jobs for which training is to be given.

Thirdly, we have to recognise that there is a tendency to classify teachers and trainers of general and technical subjects at a higher level and teachers and trainers of practical subjects at a lower level.

Fourthly, we have to admit the fact that there are shortages of vocational teachers.

HOW AND WHAT SHOULD BE DONE

I think we should, in this Workshop, ask ourselves a few questions and see if we have satisfactory answers to them. For example: are the arrangements for technical and vocational teacher/trainer recruitment and training, in the Asia/Pacific region, match up fully to changes in education and jobs? There is little sign that they do.

There is widespread shortages of vocational teachers and trainers of all categories. This will obviously increase than decrease in the future.

The candidates for vocational teacher training are required to possess certain prescribed qualifications. Are these qualifications those which candidates should in fact have? Are these qualificationns really adequate even at the present time, let alone for the future? Is not a higher level of general education essential when vocational school trainees tend to have had general education at least to junior secondary school level? Is there a case for vocational teachers to be university graduates?

Teachers of practical subjects continue to be recruited mainly for the traditional trades. Is this procedure still valid? Many of these trades are on the way out or have drastically changed? A man trained 10 or 15 years ago is no longer competent to teach them today.

What about those teachers and trainers recruited from industry? Are these teachers (recruited from industry) fully up to date on the technical side? Is it really necessary for these teachers to have complete knowledge and skill in a particular trade? Should not vocational teachers be required to have a broad knowledge and skill in a particular occupational field and complemented by thorough competence in a specialisation in this field?

New patterns and new methods are increasingly used in training. How well are the teaching staff equipped to deal with training by stages and by modular methodology?

New recruits are usually given training in pedagogical and didactic aspects. But many of them do not receive formal training at all. Should not the initial training of these personnel cover methodologies such as modules, programmed learning, radio, television. computer-aided instruction, etc. If they do not require them immediately after the course, surely they will need them very soon afterwards.

Vocational training institutions and trainers are increasingly being called upon to provide training in skills involving high technology. High technology software and hardware are constantly changing and improving.

The problem is that vocational training institutions cannot match up to industry in providing sophisticated equipment and machinery. Then how can these institutes with perhaps outdated equipment train people in high tech?

Should we leave the responsibility to the mercy and kindness of industry to provide such training? If we do, only the big firms who can afford the expansive training equipment would train their own employees. What about the employees of other firms? What about new trainees wanting to enter this field? Who will train them?

Many technical and vocational teachers and trainers have never seen the inside of a factory or have had industrial exposure and industrial culture.

Should not such teachers and trainers be given an opportunity to know how an undertaking works? Shouldn't they know the way production is carried on, the ramifications of working life such as trade union organisations (e.g. Australia, Fiji, etc), the industrial hierarchy (e.g. Japan), and the actual requirements of an operatives job?

If these teachers and trainers do not have such knowledge, how can they really adjust their instruction to their trainees?

How can arrangements for vocational teacher and trainers recruitment and training be made to fit into an integrated system of education and training? How can it be adjusted to the concept of life-long education and training?

What qualifications should be prescribed for the recruitment of vocational trainers? Should we subject potential candidates to some form of competency tests? If we decide to give practical tests, can we prescribe the national occupational trade testing and certification at Master Craft level as being the minimum requirement for employment as trainer?

Should we introduce some form of licensing system as in Japan?

Is the vocational teacher in the future be a career man who devotes his life in teaching or is he to be employed on a part-time basis? Is he going to alternate between substantial periods of teaching and of practical work experience? What should be done to upgrade and qualify vocational teachers already in the system and service to meet the new teaching demand?

Many vocational teachers do not see a clear future. How can opportunities for promotion be made available?

Now I come to the crucial issue of salaries and conditions of employment. Mr Harry Abrillo has done a study and he will share his results and experience with us tomorrow. However, I think we all know that the remuneration paid to technical and vocational teachers and trainers is low and varies considerably.

If this is so, are we likely to attract and retain competent training staff in vocational training institutes and colleges.

How can we prevent trained teaching staff being lost to industry where better salaries and employment conditions are available?

What about the professionalisation of trainers? There are a few national and international bodies trying to promote and safeguard the professional interests of trainers. What can this Workshop do to assist trainers in this matter?

There is always a shortage of funds in the training institutions to provide relevant and up to date training. They need funds to carry out research. They need funds to improve curricula, methodology, facilities and environment. What are the other sources from where additional funds may be obtained?

Is there a case for employers and industry to contribute to some kind of vocational training fund in the national interest?

Ladies and gentlemen, these are some of the issues and questions and challenges that we face and that you might want to address in the plenary and in the syndicate discussions. However, whatever conclusions you might arrive at, it is obvious that a more flexible approach will be essential. I leave it to you to ponder over these matters. Thank you.

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